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P r i n t e d i n t h e Y e a r M D C X C V.

A

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF THE

LANDS

IN THE YEAR 1850

A  
L E T T E R

TO A  
MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT, &c.

S I R,



THE *Inquiry* your Honourable House has made of late into the *Corruption* of some of its *Members*, and the Marks of Infamy you have put upon them, does give a general Satisfaction here in the Country. The hopes which your late *Votes* have rais'd in all Good men, to see at last a stop put to the crying Oppression of some in Places of Trust and Profit, do in some little measure make amends for the dismal Prospect the Death of our *Incomparable Queen* had occasion'd. If once the *Bloodsuckers* of the Nation be search'd for, in order to condign Punishment, there is nothing in their Power that the People of *England* will not cheer-  
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fully do to support His Majesties Government, and carry on the present War: And it's chiefly from their *Representatives* in Parliament that they expect such a Search and Inquiry.

You have already vindicated the Honour of your *Illustrious Body*, in sending one of your *Members* to the *Tower* for taking a *Bribe*, and in finding another of them, for taking a *Gratuity*, guilty of a high Crime and *Misdemeanour*, and then afterwards expelling him for so doing. By these *Votes* you have conferr'd an Immortality upon two Gentlemen, that might have been otherwise lost in History. And while the *Archives* of this Parliament continue in being, their Names will be perpetuated to after-Ages.

It's true, it will look but with an ill Grace beyond Sea, to hear of one of the *Members* of the *English* Parliament sent to the *Tower* for *Bribery*: So great a Name for the most incorrupted Body of Men in all *Christendom* has the House of Commons of *England* ever born. But when they come to know what a Post this Man was in, and what yearly Incomes belong'd honestly to his Place, even more than what some that take Rank among Princes are possess'd of in other Countries; Nothing but the highest Resentments of that Honourable House against him can atone for the Reproach he has brought



brought upon the Nation by so mean, and dirty a Crime.

*Ne vel Marcus* became a Proverb among the *Romans* in the Declension of that Empire ; intimating, that the Corruptions, the Vices, and Divisions of the subsequent Ages were come to that height, that even the Reign of a *Marcus Antoninus* would not be capable to reform or restore *debauch'd and sinking Rome*. That Excellent Person, who gave rise to the Proverb, was reputed the best of Philosophers, the best of Princes, and the best of Men. By his admirable Conduct and Example, he put a stop for a while both to the Vices of the Age, and to the Inundation of Misery that then threatn'd, and afterwards overwhelm'd the *Roman State*. Yet all his Virtue, and all his skill in the Arts of War and Politicks, could do no more but prop up, during his own time, a Shatter'd Fabrick, and a tottering Empire. *Rome* was rotten at the heart, and there was not Virtue enough left to carry through the *Glorious Reformation*, and noble Designs which had been so happily begun by *Antoninus*. The preceding Reigns had utterly deprav'd the *Roman Genius*. And so far were they from imitating those Actions of their Ancestors that had fill'd three Parts of the Globe with their Fame, that they were then become willing to forget quite that they had been once Masters of the World.

*Antoninus* did all that Man could do, both in the Arts of Peace and War. He not only deliver'd *Rome* from foreign *Invasions* that threatn'd the very Center of the Empire; but carri'd his Arms in Person beyond its usual *Boundaries*, both on the *East* and *West*, and brought under his Dominion several Nations that had never before submitted their Necks to the *Roman* Yoke. At home he restor'd the *Roman* Senate (or *Parliament*) to its *Ancient Rights*, which had been invaded by some of his Predecessors: And by his own Example did all that was possible to bring Virtue into request. But alas! All his Efforts were in vain. *Rome* was become the Sink of Vice and Corruption; and even *Antoninus* was not sufficient to Reform the Age! Yet Heaven was pleas'd by his Means, and for a Reward to his Virtue, to put a stop for a considerable time to the Fate of his Country: But not long after he was gone, the Divine Vengeance refus'd to be atton'd, and that proud City that had given Law to Mankind for a great many Ages, fell at last a Prey to Barbarous Nations, whose Religion, Language, and Customs they did not understand, and some of whose Names they had never heard of.

I pray God, Sir, there may be no ground for a Parallel betwixt *Rome* at that time, and *England* now.

now. I would fain hope that it may be in the Power of a Prince that possesses all the good Qualities of *Antoninus*, to retrieve *England* from the Fate it deserves. And yet you'll agree with me, That in most kinds of Vice we exceed *Rome* it self, even in its most degenerated Times.

I confess there are some Vices, that instead of bringing Ruin to a Countrey, may help sometimes, by *Accident*, to raise it to a higher Pitch of Glory. Such are *Ambition*, *Emulation*, and *Thirst after Dominion*. These were the *Darling Vices* of the Ancient *Romans*, and the *Illustrious Crimes* by which, from a Beggary Village, they rose to the Universal Monarchy. There are others that naturally tend to the Destruction of a State, such as *Covetousness*, *Corruption*, and *preferring Private Interests to that of the Publick*. These last were seldom or never heard of in the first and best Ages of the *Roman Empire*. The Genius of *Rome* mov'd in a higher Orb: *Glory* and *Renown* were the Deities they ador'd; nor could the *Roman Eagle* stoop to so low a Quarry as that of *Gold*.

Time was, My Friend, when *Cincinnatus* was brought from the Plow, to take upon him the *Supreme Command*; and when he had sav'd his Countrey, he return'd to his Plow again. His whole Estate,

Estate, when he came to be Dictator, was but Seven Acres of Ground; and so far was he from purchasing more, that he sold Three of them to pay what he had fallen short of in his Publick Accounts. There was a time, when a *Paulus Emilius* in his Triumph over *Persus*, carried up with him to the Capitol the Inestimable Spoils of the Kingdom of *Macedon*, which the Kings of that Countrey had been heaping up for some Hundreds of Years. Of all that vast Amass of Treasure the Noble Conqueror kept nothing to himself; and when he came to dye, all he left behind him was not sufficient to make a tolerable Maintenance for his Wife. *A Glorious Poverty, and a Renown'd Want!*

That Inimitable Patern of Magnanimity and Love to his Countrey, *Attilus Regulus*, after he had destroy'd the Riches of *Carthage* by the Success of many Battels, being in *Africk* he came to understand that the Senate had continued his Command for a Year longer: Whereupon he writes a very earnest and submissive Letter to the Consuls, telling them, That the Bailiff of his little Farm in the Countrey was dead, and that one he had hir'd since, was run away with the Utensils of his Husbandry; and therefore desires Leave to come home, lest his Land lying untill'd, his Wife and Children should want Bread.

What

What need I to instance more of this kind? The Greek and Roman Story are full of them. But perhaps you may say, These men had no opportunities to be Rich, and therefore it was against their wills they dy'd so Poor. No, Sir, but on the contrary, all these I have nam'd wanted no opportunities to enrich themselves if they had pleas'd: Not only vast Sums of the Publick Money past through their hands, but immense Riches of Conquer'd Provinces. These Men fought for their Countrey, for Liberty, for Glory, and scorn'd to stoop to any other Recompence, but the Praise and Satisfaction of their having done well.

But perhaps you may yet tell me, They were Fools in all this. Be it so, as the world goes now: But let me tell you, It was by such Follies as these, that Rome not only conquer'd Countries, but Hearts too; and together with their Arms did propagate Morality, Civility, Arts and Sciences, among the Numberless People they subdued.

If you ask me, How came it to pass then, that notwithstanding all these Sublime Virtues of the Anciene Romans, Rome became at length a Prey, first to its Fellow-Citizens, and afterwards to Foreign Nations? I answer, It was Corruption that occasion'd this Wonderful and Dismal Change. When Virtue and Merit entitl'd Men to Employments in the

the Commonwealth, *Rome* was Great and Happy; but after that Money came into the Scale, such men came into Places as became both the Bane and the Shame of the Roman State. What was it that brought the Grecian Governments, so much celebrated in Ancient History, to ruin? Was it not Corruption? Philip of Macedon made his Advantage of it: He Bought more Cities than he Conquer'd; and bragg'd that there was none so strong, but an Als laden with Gold might enter into it. What was it that made Carthage, the once Rival of Rome, to become a Heap of Rubbish? Was it not Corruption? The Brave Hannibal found it a harder Task to struggle with the Corrupted Faction of Hanno at Home, than to wage War against the Romans Abroad; and the once flourishing Carthaginian Commonwealth became first a Prey to the Avarice of its own Citizens, before she was forc'd to submit her self to the Conquering Sword of Scipio.

Yet, Sir, give me leave to do both the Romans, Greeks, and Carthaginians, the Justice, as to acquit them of one kind of Corruption that's to be found in the Age we now live in; I cannot call to mind, that ever they enrich'd themselves with the Money that was destin'd for the Safety of their Countrey; nor can you give any Instance of one of them that fill'd his own Coffers with what was given by the People



People for Maintenance of their Armies in Times of Imminent hazard of their State. Even in the most degenerated Ages of the World, it was accounted Sacrilege to divert to any private use the Money that was set apart for so great an End. Among all Nations, such Money was held equally Sacred with that appointed for the Service of their Gods; and to purloin the least Farthing from either the one or the other was ever branded with the blackest mark of Infamy.

If ever there was a time when a Crime of this Nature admitted of the highest Aggravations, now is the time. It's now, that England has its All at Stake, and upon the Success of this War depends not only its own, but the Fate of Christendom. We fight not now for Glory, Dominion, or a point of Honour, but for Liberty, for Religion, for our Laws, our Properties, and in a word, for all we can wish for to make us Easy and Happy. Our Fleets and Armies carry with them the Fortunes of Three Kingdoms, and the meanest Soldier and Seaman in the King's Service has intrusted to him some share of this mighty Stock. The Money rais'd at this time by Act of Parliament, is the Money of the Nation. Every one bears a share in it, and every one expects too, that it should be appli'd for the Publick Safety, since it's so nobly given for defraying the Charge of the most

necessary, and the most important War this Nation was ever hitherto engag'd in.

It's for such a War as this, that all Nations, whether Pagan or Christian have thought it no Sin to make use of the Utensels of their Churches and Temples, and of the Sacred Treasures they or their Ancestors had dedicated to the Service of the gods they ador'd. Must it not then be a Sacrilege of the deepest dye, to rob these our Armies or Fleets of any part (tho never so small) of the Money appointed for them; when to borrow from the Altar to pay them, would be none? It's true, and thanks to Heaven for it, we are under no such hardship at present, and there is ground enough to hope we may bring this War to a happy period, without being put to any such necessitous Shifts to defray the Charge of it. But still these Blood-suckers of the Nation that defraud our Soldiers or Seamen of never so little of their Due, are as guilty as if we were actually reduc'd to such an Extremity as I have now mention'd.

Shall they every day for our Sakes expose their Lives to a thousand dangers, and look Death in the Face in a thousand various Shapes, while in the mean time we enjoy a perfect Ease and Quiet at Home? And yet shall there be found amongst us, any one that at one single Bribe dare fileh as  
much



much of their Money, as would maintain at full Pay near three hundred Soldiers for a Month: In which case it's hard for a Man that loves his Country, not to wish an *Anathema* to the Giver, and much more one to the Receiver.

My Neighbours here in the Country plague me with a thousand Questions about Mr. G----. Sometimes they ask me, What great things this Gentleman hath done for his Country, that he deserves so profitable a place? They expect I should acquaint them with some signal Opposition he had made to the violent Courses of the last Reigns, or of some great Losses he sustain'd by them: They will needs be inquiring about his Behaviour, with relation to the late Revolution, and what wonderful Achievements he has done for the support of the present Government? But, I, not having the honour to be known to the Gentleman, am not able to answer to all these Questions, and therefore I must intreat you, who possibly know him, to resolve them for me.

Tho this be no laughing matter, yet I cannot omit to tell you a pretty ridiculous Passage that fell out here t'other day. Mr. G. and Sir J. T. being the Subject of the Discourse, as they seldom fail to be of late, an honest Neighbour of mine, but none of the greatest Politicians, you may easily guess, would needs out of pure good Nature extenuate

Mr. G's fault, by saying, That perhaps he had a numerous Family, and might be tempted to take 200 *Guineas* to put off some Daughter, who it may be lay upon his hands for want of a Portion. After a mighty Debate among our Country Statesmen, it was resolv'd by a Vote of the Board, that no other Circumstance but this mention'd by my Neighbour could in any way extenuate the Bribery.

I hapn'd to come in at the end of this wise Debate, and found that skipping from one thing to another, the Company came at last to run down their Comrade, for imagining that 200 *Guineas* was a competent Portion for a Daughter of Mr. G's. To bring off my Friend, tho at the expence of a piece of History, I was forc'd to tell them, That even in the time of the height of the *Roman* Empire, such a Sum of Money would have been esteem'd a very considerable Portion for the Noblest and Greatest Senators of *Rome* to give with a Daughter: And that the Daughter of the Immortal *Scipio Affricanus* (a Man not much inferior to Mr. G.) was said to have had a considerable Portion given her by the Senate (for her Father had nothing to give her, tho Master of the Spoils of *Carthage*) when it amounted but to *Two thousand pieces of Brass Money*) which  
comes

comes far short of *Two hundred Guineas* of ours.

But to leave this ridiculous Digression; if your Illustrious Body has done themselves Justice in their Vote against Mr. G. they had done much more so in those against *the late Speaker*: And nothing can gain them greater Reputation abroad, than to hear of one in so high a Post, not only expell'd the *Chair*, but the *House*, for taking a *Gratuity* after the passing an *Act* of Parliament. If it had been voted a *Bribe*, every body would have expected to have seen him expell'd; but to run up his punishment so high for a *Gratuity* only, and for a *Gratuity* given after the *Act* was past, is only worthy of that nice Honour that has been ever so conspicuous in an *English House of Commons*. By this noble and just Procedure of yours, it will be made known to future Ages, that that which Custom may render allowable in other Men, and in other Stations, is yet a *high Crime and Misdemeanor* in any one that shall have the Honour to sit within *these Walls*.

We are told by the *Rabbins*, That none were admitted into the *Great Council of the Jewish Nation*, who had the least Stain upon his Reputation or Honour; nor were they allowed even to ask a just Debt of a Man while his Suit depended before them, lest it should be thought he paid it out of fear. As the

the Room where they sat was open above, to put them in mind of that All-seeing Being that look'd down upon them from his *Emperean Throne* in so solemn an Occasion; so they were not so much as to touch Money upon any account whatsoever that Morning they met, and were to wash their Hands at the Door as they enter'd. And all this to intimate that *Superlative Purity*, which became the Members of so Sacred an Assembly.

If you had voted your late *Speaker's Fault* to have been *Bribery*, and upon that had expell'd him, you had not done your selves so transcendant a piece of Justice, nor given Mankind so clear and illustrious an Idea of your untainted *Probity*, and that impartial Concern you have for the Country you represent. But in inflicting such a publick Mark of your Displeasure upon him for a Fault of a softer Name, you have rais'd to your selves lasting Monuments in the Hearts and Affections of all Good men, and have left to Posterity the exact Standard of what sort of Man, a Member of the English Sanbedrim ought to be.

But when all is done, what a just Indignation must it raise in every one that loves his Country, to see it possible for Corruption so far to enter into that Chair, as to take Money for an Act of Parliament. This is a monstrous Production in Nature,  
unknown

unknown to the Ages past, and only to be found in this. To take a *Gratuity* for an Act of Parliament is ill enough, but to take one for an Act in favour of *Poor Orphans*, for an Act in which, not only the Honour of the Nation, but the Subsistence of some hundreds of People of good Fashion and Quality, that wanted Bread and must have starv'd without it; to take a Gratuity for such an Act, is a thing scarce to be parallell'd. This was to Rob the Poor with a witness. A Crime which we see every day, the Wretches that Pad upon the *High-way* disdain to commit.

The Poet had reason to exclaim against the *Sacred Hunger of Gold* in the times he liv'd in; but had he liv'd in ours, he had had much more reason to do so. There are some Men now-a days that behave themselves in this Government, as if they thought themselves in an *Enemies Country*. Their manner of raking Money looks like the *Sacking of a Conquer'd Town*; for whatever comes in their way is with them *fair Plunder*. If a Stranger were to come in amongst us, and observe those People's Actions, he should take the Nation to be upon the point of breaking, and some Men for *Bankrupts*, ready to carry off what they can of the *Publick-Stock*.

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The Impostor *Warbeck* either was, or feign'd to be more tender of his Native Country, than these Gentlemen are. When with the Assistance of a Neighbouring King, he came into *England* to vindicate his pretended Right to the Crown, he express'd with Tears in his Eyes, the concern he had for the Havock his Army made in the *Northern* Counties, and wish'd he had rather never been born, than to be the occasion of so much Spoil, tho in a just Cause. If he was not sincere in his Grief, it was true Policy in him to appear so. And the wisest of Kings took a right way to find out the true Mother of the Child, by putting her natural Affection upon the severest Trial.

I would ask you a Question, Whether you think these Men that take Money with both hands from their own Country-men, might not be tempted to take the same from the Enemies of it? For my part, if I were to follow that *Trade*, I should rather deal with a *French*, than with an *English* Customer: And it seems to me more generous in it self, and less hurtful to my Country, to ease the *French* Monarch of some of his superfluous Cash, than to rob my Neighbours here at home of any part of theirs.

But perhaps you'll tell me, these Gentlemen are true to the *present Government*, and can never be tempted



tempted into another *Interest*. No thanks to them for the first, for they gain by it: And as to the second, I can scarce believe but its rather for want of being able to better their Condition, than for any Principle or hearty Affection to ours. For it is natural enough to conclude, That he who can be bought with Money, will yield himself to him that bids most.

If these Men instead of *pilfering* at Home, could find a way to take Money from our Enemies, in the manner, and with the design, that it's said, a late Minister of *France* took that of a Neighbouring State, I should heartily forgive them. The Story goes thus, Monsieur *Colbert* acquainted his Master with an offer had been made him of a considerable Pension from a Foreign Minister, if he would ingage to give him notice from time to time, of the *French* Designs. The King not only allow'd, but commanded him to accept of it, laying down at the same time a Scheme how the Intelligence to be given, should keep up *Colbert's* Credit with that Foreign Minister, but withal should be of Advantage to the *French* King. Thus the one had his Pension, and the other was egregiously cheated both out of his Money and Intelligence. A nice kind of Counter-plot, and to be intrusted with none but those, whose Fidelity a Prince has as much

reason to be assur'd of, as the French King of Monsieur Colbert's.

But alas! my Friend, when once the love of Money gets the Ascendant, all other Passions and Interests must stoop to its Sway: And Gold with a Man of that Temper will prove too heavy, tho' his Country and his Religion were laid together in the Scale. It was a severe Exclamation of Jugurtha, when being sold and betray'd to Scilla, he was brought within view of Rome. O! urbem venalem (says he) & quandoque parituram si haberet emptorem. O Mercenary Town! that one time or another must needs perish, if ever it chance to meet with a Buyer. A saying that will be true to the end of the World of all Nations where Corruption and Bribery get once footing.

Your late Speaker was certainly a Gentleman, whose great Parts and Abilities, fitly qualified him for the Chair. If I had been worthy to sit in that House, I know not but from a mistaken Zeal for its Honour, I might have err'd upon the other side, and determin'd my Vote by a remarkable President in Roman History, which possibly I might be fool enough to apply to his Case. A Pro-consul of Asia, being accus'd before the Senate, for taking from the People of his Province a Present of fine Horses, rich Tapistry Hangings, and other Household



Houſhold Furniture of great Value: His Plea was, That they were given him unask'd. His Accuſers inſiſted upon the great Danger there was, of his being induc'd by theſe Gifts to pervert Juſtice in favour of the Givers. Upon a full hearing *he was acquitted*, and the reaſon which the Senate gave for it, was, That it was not to be ſo much as ſuppos'd, that a Preſent could poſſibly corrupt a Proconſul of Rome. But the World, you'll ſay, is much chang'd ſince that time, and *we are not Romans*.

But for all this, No People puniſh'd Bribery more ſeverely than they did, of which I ſhall give you but one remarkable Inſtance. *Julius Syllanus*, the *Prætor*, was accus'd for Bribery, and the Senate appointed a day to hear the Complaint. His Father, the Famous *Manlius* begg'd of the Senate, that the Cauſe might be referr'd to him, which was granted. Upon hearing both Parties, *he found his Son guilty*, and condemn'd him to loſe his Head. Not only ſo, but *he refus'd to aſſiſt at his Funeral*, and the day of his Execution; he gave Access at home to every body that had Buſineſs with him. So juſt a Horror, and ſo noble an Indignation had *Manlius* for his Son's Crime, that paternal Affection, the ſweeteſt of Paſſions, took no place, where he thought the Honour and Juſtice of his Country was concern'd.

It's a true Remark of the Duke of Rohans, That the Repute of Justice and Integrity does oftentimes contribute more to the Support of a State in difficult times, than either their Arms or Military Skill can. It was that which buoy'd up that little Government of Sparta, against all its Neighbours much more powerful than themselves, during the Succession of some hundreds of Years. But when once they came to degenerate from their Ancient Virtue, all the Spartan Valour so much fam'd in History, was not able to save them from Ruin; tho as Thucydides observes, *They were as good Soldiers then as at any time before.*

It's in vain then for our King to have rais'd the Reputation of England in point of War to a greater height than it has been since the beginning of this Century; or to have acquir'd to Us a large Room in the Affairs and Counsels of our Neighbouring Kingdoms and States, which we either never had, or utterly lost. It's in vain for him to expose his Person in Battel for our Sakes, or for Us to have the Glory to see a King of England at the Head of a Mighty Army on the Continent, which has not happen'd in any of the Seven Reigns before him. In vain are we now Masters not only of the Ocean, but of a Sea we never pretended to: Or that by the Example and Conduct of a Warlike Prince, the

the *English* Courage has regain'd its Ancient Reputation both at Sea and Land. It's in vain we are restor'd to our Laws and Liberties, or that we feel none of these Miseries that other Nations lie under. It's in vain (I say) all this, as long as *Virtue*, *Probity*, and *Love to our Country* are wanting, and we by our Corruption and like inglorious Practices, weaken the Foundations of our Happiness. The King will reap Immortal Praise for all his Toil: But of Us it shall be said by way of Reproach to after Ages, *That such a Nation might have been Happy, but they would not.*

The World was once blest with an *Epaminondas*, that by his *Military Virtue* rais'd a People far short of *Us* in extent of Dominion or Riches, to a high pitch of Glory: But this Glory of theirs was of a short continuance. While that Illustrious General govern'd the *Theban State*, *Thebes* was both the envy and terror of *Greece*; Victory attended their Arms, and Success their Counsels. No sooner was he gone, but all their Laurels wither'd, and they became a Prey to their Neighbours: Nor was he able with all his *Virtue* to entail Happiness upon a degenerated People any longer than his own Life. The *Thebans* were *Thebans* still; and the bright Example that *Epaminondas*

nondas had set them, and the glorious Actions he had done, serv'd only to render their subsequent *fall the more conspicuous, and the less pitied.*

When Corruption comes once to over-run a Nation, Virtue its self becomes a Crime, and he that's guiltiest, is sure to fare best. It's a known Story to this purpose of the Spaniard writing to his Friend, a Vice-Roy of Mexico. *You are here accus'd (says he) of cheating the King of some Millions of Money in your Government. All I can say, is, if it be true, you are safe; if otherwise, you are undone.* It was said of Cato, *He was too good for the Age he liv'd in.* And Solomon wisely foresaw the danger that attends a Rigid Virtue in degenerated times: *Be not over-righteous (says he); for why shouldst thou dye before thy time?* In a vicious and corrupted Age, it were happy for a virtuous Man to be lost in the Croud. If he comes to be known, he runs the hazard of being undone. His Innocence is to other Men a tacit Reproach of their Crimes, and tho in spite of themselves they cannot restrain from paying in their thoughts a secret Homage to his Virtue, yet at the same time they must needs hate him in their Hearts. *A hard Fate, you'll say, for being good!* But hard tho it be, let you and I endeavour to deserve it.

*Epicurns*

*Epicurus*, you know, plac'd Happiness in that Pleasure and Delight which arises from a constant course of Vertuous Actions. All other Pleasures were unworthy of that Excellent Man, whatever has been since said to the contrary by a Set of Wretches that would shelter themselves under so Great a Name. It was the Pleasure of the Mind, the noble and immortal part of Man, that the Philosopher meant: And he was much in the right on't. To grow Rich by Corruption, or to raise a Fortune by Bribery, is but at best a Repentance dear bought: But to serve our Country from a publick and self-disinterested Principle, carries with it a noble kind of Pleasure, and the only sort of Pride that's allowable.

When Honour was the Reward of Good and Great Actions, It was more courted then, than Gold it self is now: And a Triumph or a Statue was infinitely more valu'd at Rome, than all the Riches of the East. Among our selves there has been found the like Spirit. At the time of the Spanish Invasion in 1588. most of the Noblemen and Gentlemen of England came chearfully in to serve Queen Elizabeth, and their Countrey, against the Common Enemy of both. A certain Gentleman came to the Camp of Tilbury with 300 men of his own Tenants and Retinue, and upon his own Charge.

Charge. Taking leave of his Wife at home, He bid her be chearful in his absence, *For he hop'd at his return to make her a Lady*; meaning he should be Knighted for his Good Service. All he aim'd at for the Reward of his Zeal and Expence for his Countrey, was the honour of Knighthood; *a Mark of Favour in those days granted but to few.*

I have often regretted the hard fate of that great Restorer of Learning, the Lord Chancellor Bacon, who stands to all Ages an Illustrious Example of the Instability of Human Greatness, and withal an instance of the Justice of this Nation in the Case of *Bribery*. A great Man he was, and the Son of a great Father, and had attain'd to the highest Dignity in the State. All this Greatness, and all his Vast Accomplishments were not able to protect him from an Accusation of *Bribery*; and all that could be prov'd against him, was *his allowing one of his Servants to accept a Present of a Suit of beaten Silver Buttons*. For this single Fault, was he thrown down from his Preferments to the lowest Ebb of Fortune, and *died in Obscurity for want of the Necessaries of Life.*

Another great Man sunk under a like fate some Years after. Cranfield, Earl of Middlesex, Lord High-Treasurer of England was arraign'd for Corruption and *Bribery*. Neither the Treasurer's Staff,  
nor



nor the many eminent Services he had done the Crown could secure him from a severe Sentence. *He was declar'd in Parliament incapable of Publick Trust, to lose his Vote in the House of Peers, to be committed to the Tower during Pleasure, and fin'd in 10000l. For payment of which Fine, he was necessitated to sell a considerable Estate at Chelsea.* If it were needful, I might run up to Ancient Times, and show how severely our Ancestors were pleased to punish this Ignoble Crime. But being it's undeniable, that We and all other Nations have in all Ages of the World held it in the highest Detestation, I shall trouble you with no more.

Perhaps you'll tell me, Those who gave your late *Speaker* the *Gratuity* mention'd in your *Votes*, were to blame. I think, No. If a man of that *Sordid Principle* will not do me Justice without Money, I know not why I may not give it him; rather than suffer by his Injustice. The Fault is none of mine: It's his, that would not do me reason without it. If one be unjustly possess'd of a Thousand pounds of my Money, and I find that neither Honour, Conscience, nor Law, can prevail with him to restore it, I were wanting to my self if did not chuse rather to part with a hundred Pounds of it, than lose it all. He

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is a Knave for keeping my Money from me, but I am not in the blame to treat him as I would do a Robber on the Highway, *give him a part to save the rest.*

The *Canonists* are nice enough in determining the particular Cares wherein it's blameable or lawful to give a *Bribe* or *Gratuity*, call it what you will. They all agree, That to give one in order to obtain an unjust thing, is a Crime both in the Giver and Receiver: But when one has to do with a Person that denies him a Matter, not only just in its self, but which by his Place he is obliged to grant, he that takes a *Gratuity* for doing it, is highly guilty; but he that gives it, is not only blameless, but has a right in Law to demand Restitution of what he was necessitated to give.

To come to the Case in hand. The *Orphans Bill* was one of the noblest and justest that ever was brought within these Walls. So many delays, it seems, were found out from time to time, by the late *Speaker*, That the Managers for the City of *London* saw it was impossible to carry it through, without giving a *Gratuity* to that Gentleman for it. They were neither to be Losers nor Gainers themselves, whatever way it went. They were only *Trustees* for the City, and for the *Orphans*,  
that



that must have perish'd if it did not pass. In order to obtain then, an Act so Good and Charitable in its self, and so much both for the Honour of the City of *London*, and for the ease of poor Orphans, they chus'd rather to make the *Present* requir'd, than by not doing it, lose a general Good.

I remember a Story that meets this Case. A *Stoick Philosopher* had solicited *Dionysius* the Tyrant of *Sicily*, often and long for Justice in a certain business. He was delay'd from time to time. At last the Philosopher bethought himself of the only way to move the Tyrant to grant his Request. He comes to him one day, and prostrating himself upon his Face before him, kisses his Feet, as his other Court-Flatterers us'd to do. The Tyrant was so pleasingly surpriz'd with this unwonted Submission of the *Stoick*, that he immediately granted the Boon he had so often refus'd before. The rest of the Philosophers of that *Sect* were out of Humour with their Friend for so base a Condescension, and accus'd him of acting contrary to the Principles of their Philosophy. You have no reason (answer'd he) to be offended with my Carriage, when you consider the necessity of it. I hate the Tyrant and Tyranny as much as you do, but having a just Request to ask of him, I made my Application for several

Years together in vain: Till finding that his Ears were in his Feet instead of his Head, I thought I could not be blam'd for applying to that part of him where he only could bear me. The Philosopher was certainly in the right. And since there are some men now-a-days that will not hear a just Request, except one speak to their Eists; It's no fault to apply to them in their own way, all others being ineffectual.

But what a hopeful Condition is a Nation in when it comes to this! Where Money without Merit will open the Door, Fools and Knaves will be sure to enter sooner than Honest Men: And he that pays his Money, will certainly take care to repay himself where he can, tho at the expence of his Country. They have the same Plea for cheating the Publick, that a Counsellor of the Chancery at Paris pleaded in Francis the First's time. He was accus'd for Extortion, and exacting more than his Fees. His Defence was, That truly he had bought his Place so very dear, That unless he took the Methods he was charg'd with, it was not possible for him to make up the Price he had given for it. However, It seems this Plea had no great weight with his Judges; For they Decreed his Money should be refunded to him, and he to pay it into the Hospital for the use of the Poor, and both the Buyer and Seller to be incapable of all publick Trust for the future.

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But when all is done, Sir, We have this to comfort our selves with, amidst all these dismal Reflections, That not only the Body of the Nation has a just abhorrence for those Corrupt Practices; but that in the Ministry, on the Bench, and in most Places of Trust, there are Men who by their Example do all they can to bring Justice and Honour in to request. A Shrewsbury, a Pembroke, a Sommers, or a Holt, are not to be found in every Age; and the less esteem we have for men that abuse their Places, the more we ought to have for those, who instead of enriching themselves at all hands on the Publick Cost, make it their aim to serve their King, and It, to the best advantage of both.

Shall the French Subjects in spite of all the horrid Invasions made by that Monarch upon their Liberties, and of the innumerable Hardships and Miseries his Ambition has brought upon them, continue yet to serve him and their Country with an inviolable Fidelity: And at the same time shall We fall short, either in our Duty to a Prince that has restor'd Us to our Liberties, or in our Love to a Country, that we can much more properly call *Ours*, than the French have reason to call *France* Theirs, being their King is absolute Master of all? Let us imitate our Enemies in what's noble and just; and while our King does what's possible to raise

raise us to (at least) an equal Level with them in point of War, Let us not fall short of them in those Vertues that are absolutely necessary to make a Peace when it comes, to be lasting and happy.

I have done, when I have told you, That this Letter is writ with the same freedom which you have always allow'd me; And that I am, Intirely,

S I R,

*Yours.*

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